

The diagram illustrates a probe position detecting apparatus. A **LIGHT SOURCE** (16) emits a beam of light (11) that is directed towards a probe (21) in contact with a specimen (13). The probe is connected to a **PROBE POSITION DETECTING MEANS** (12). The specimen is mounted on a stage (17) that can move vertically, as indicated by a double-headed arrow. The stage is connected to a **TREMOR MEANS** (13) and a **SCAN MEANS** (15). The **SCAN MEANS** (15) is connected to a **CONTROL MEANS** (14) and a **DATA COLLECTING MEANS** (18). The **CONTROL MEANS** (14) is also connected to the **PROBE POSITION DETECTING MEANS** (12). The **DATA COLLECTING MEANS** (18) is connected to a **PICTURE SIGNAL PROCESSING MEANS** (20). The **PICTURE SIGNAL PROCESSING MEANS** (20) is connected to a **TWO-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE SENSOR** (19). The **TWO-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE SENSOR** (19) is connected to the **SCAN MEANS** (15).

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FIG. 3

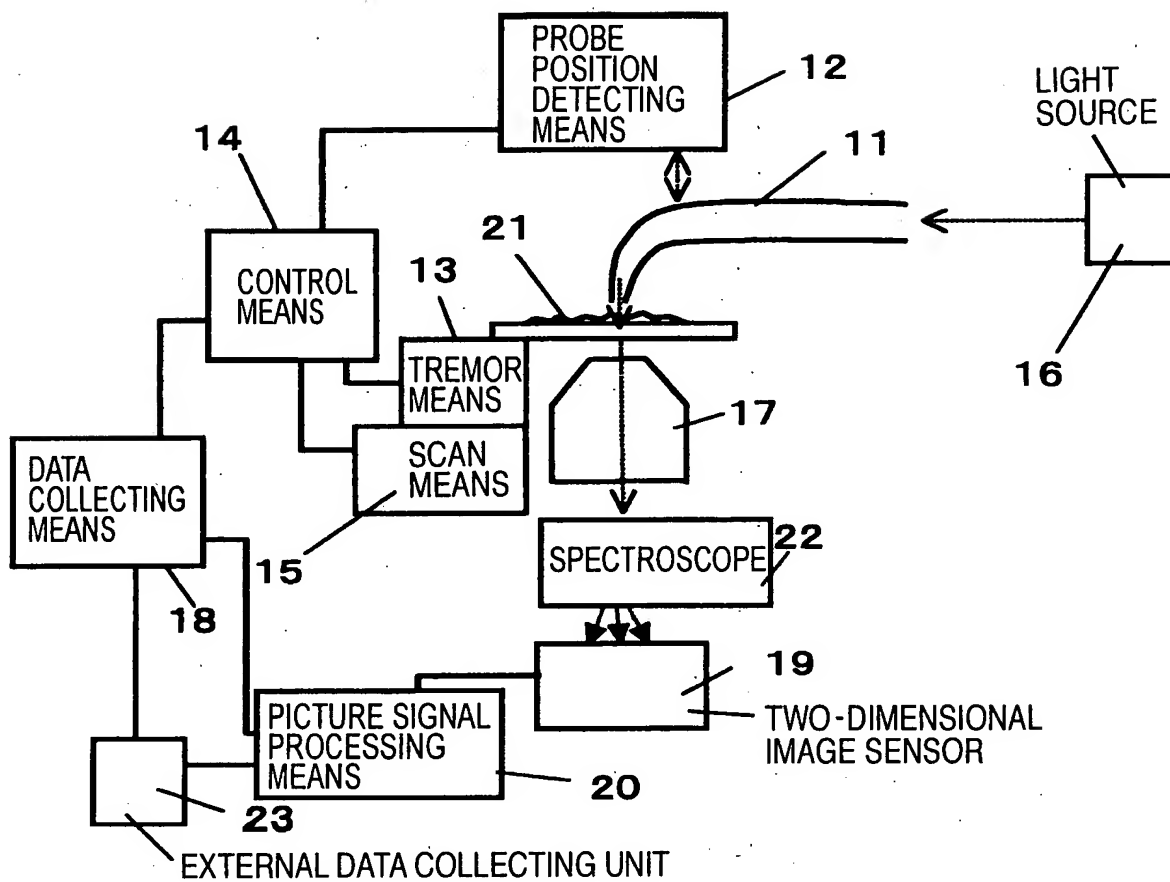


FIG. 4A

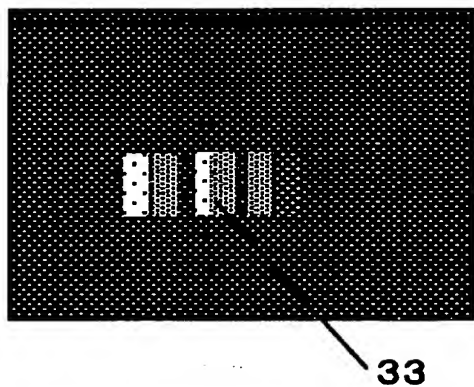


FIG. 4B

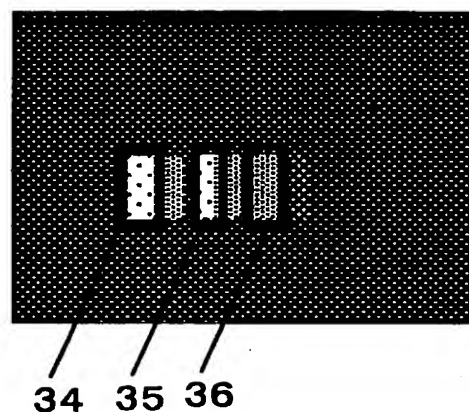


FIG. 9

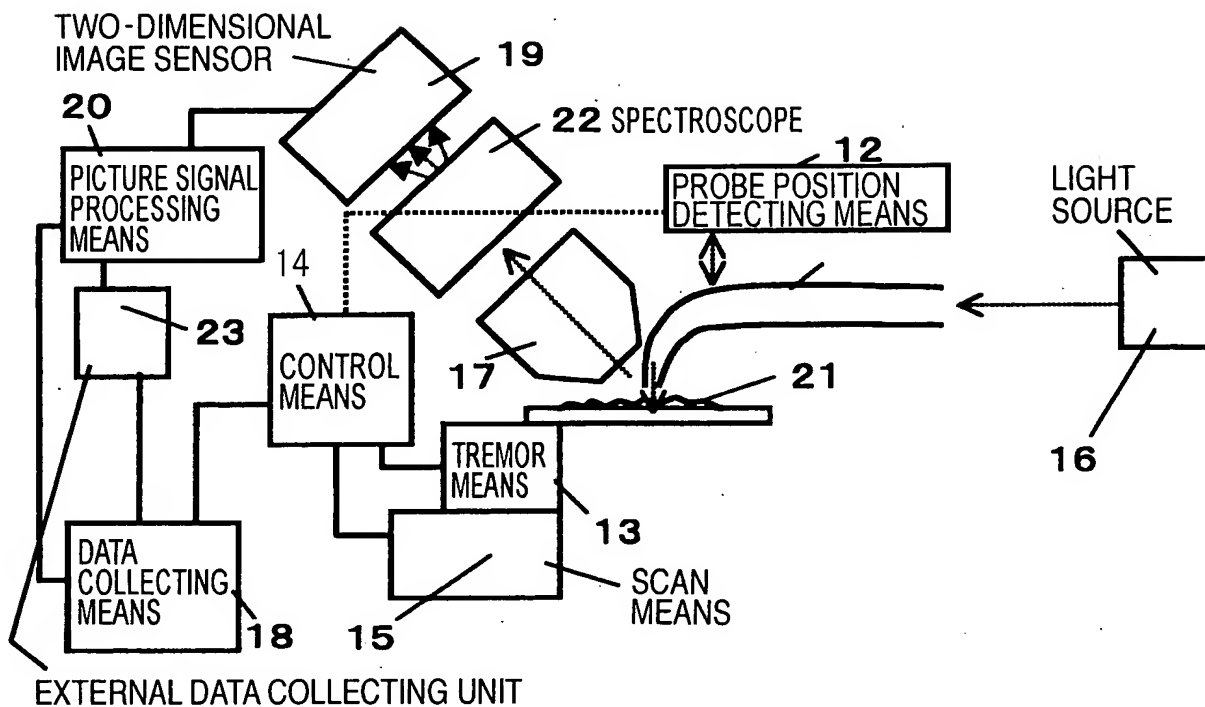


FIG. 10

